

---

# WE BUILT A BARN! A STORY ABOUT SADDLE-BILLED STORK WELFARE AND BREEDING.

By Amanda Baca  
ABQ BioPark Zoo

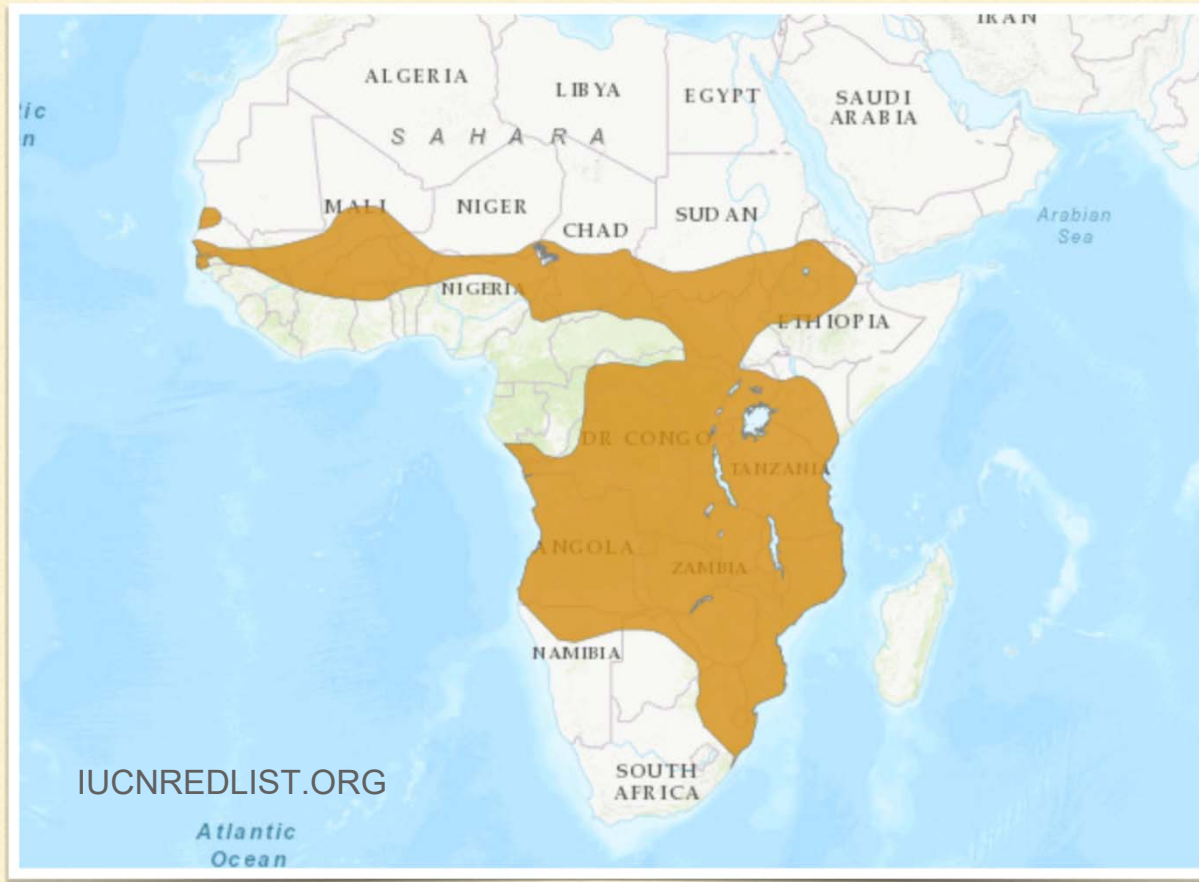
[amandabaca@cabq.gov](mailto:amandabaca@cabq.gov)

---



# Saddle-billed Storks

## Natural History



- Wetlands/Grasslands in Africa
- IUCN: Least concern, population decreasing
- Breeding season begins towards end of the rainy season, beginning of the dry season
- Construct large nest in trees near water
- Copulate on top of nest
- Lay 1-5 eggs (2-3 on average)
- Incubation is 30-35 days

# Saddle-billed Storks

- 1.0 Hatched in 2001 at San Diego Safari Park

0.1 Hatched in 2001 at Toledo Zoo

Paired together at Nashville Zoo in 2002

Came to live at the ABQ BioPark Zoo in 2005

Have shown interest in nest building in Nov/Dec  
Past nest have been small, no eggs



# Why a new barn?



- Old barn very small: Roughly 13ft (L)x 9ft (W)x 8ft (H)
- Determined needed more width and head space to increase chance of successful breeding
  - Copulate on nest with male standing on female's back while flapping wings for balance
  - Storks around 5 feet tall, 8-9 foot wingspan
- Also wanted it to serve as a larger night house for the winter.

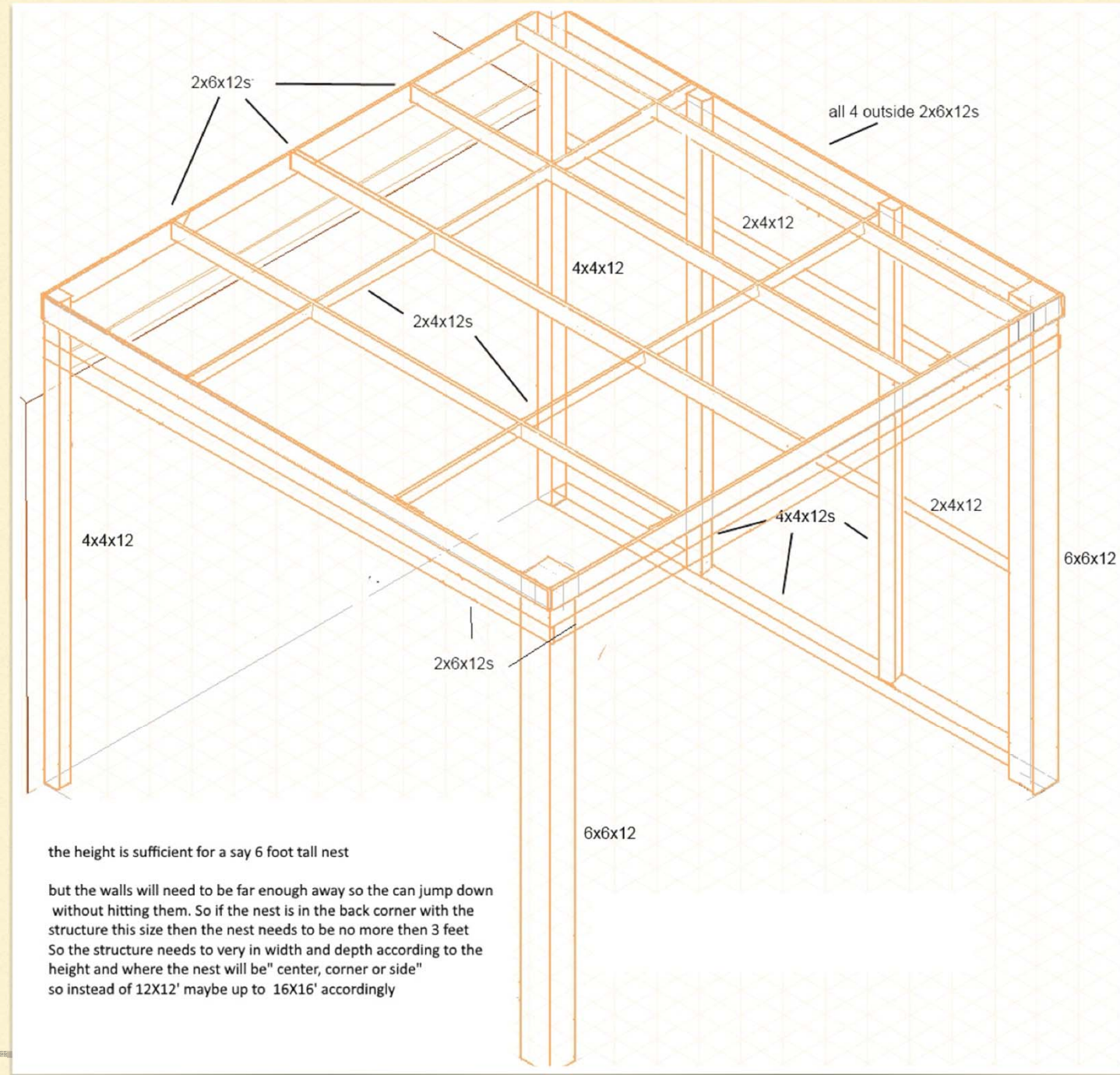
# The Design

- Plans from Fort Worth Zoo

Used as a guide and adapted it to fit our needs.

Wanted to attach it to the old barn to increase overall size.

With the guidance of our maintenance team, we ordered materials and began to build!





# The Materials

23 plywood panels (4x8)

8 2x6x16

3 2x8x16

4 8x8x16

5 4x4x16

5 2x4x16

4 2x2x16

3 heavy duty hinges

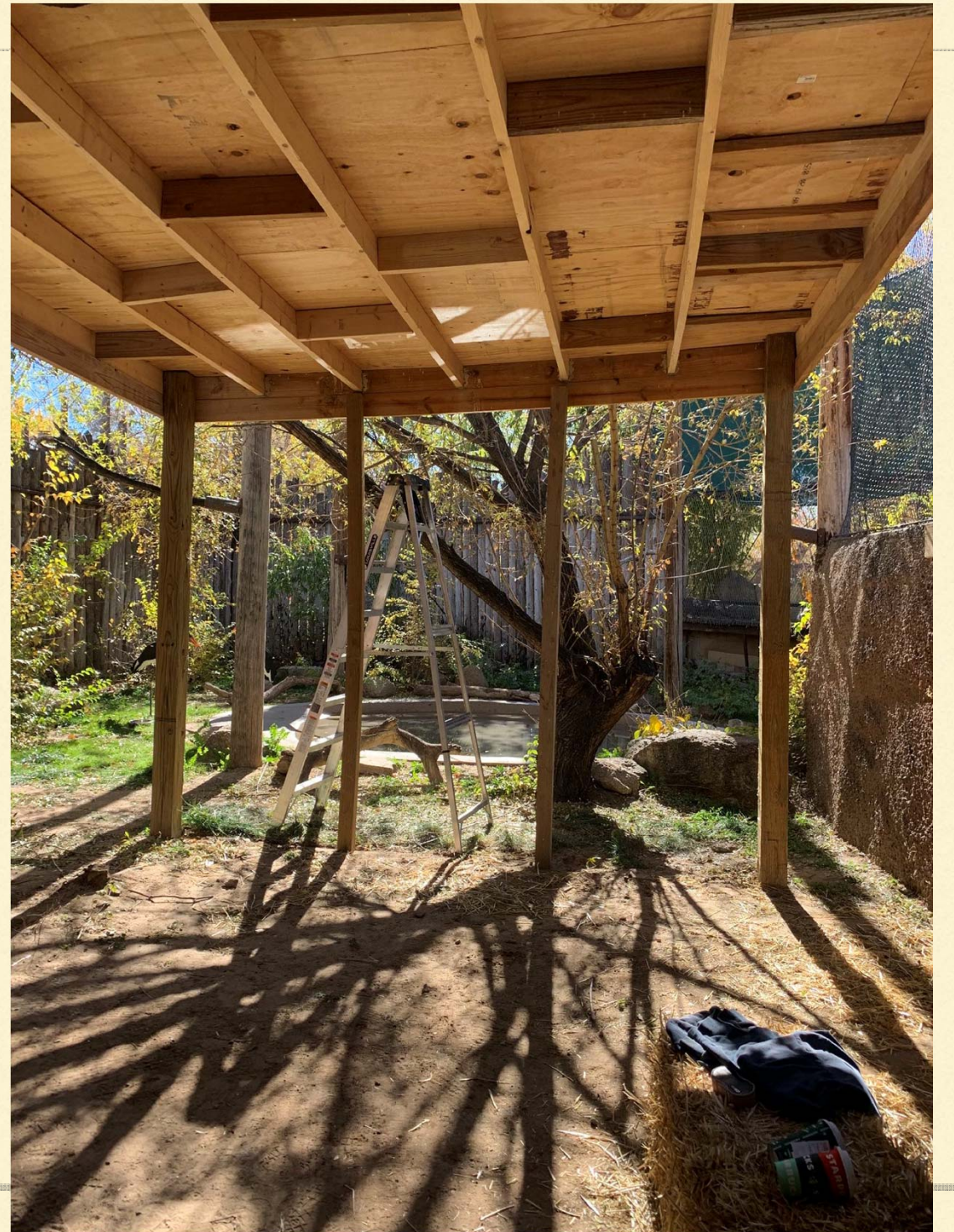
1 latch

16 joist hangers

1 box Philip head wood screws (4")

Policarb clear roof panels (?)










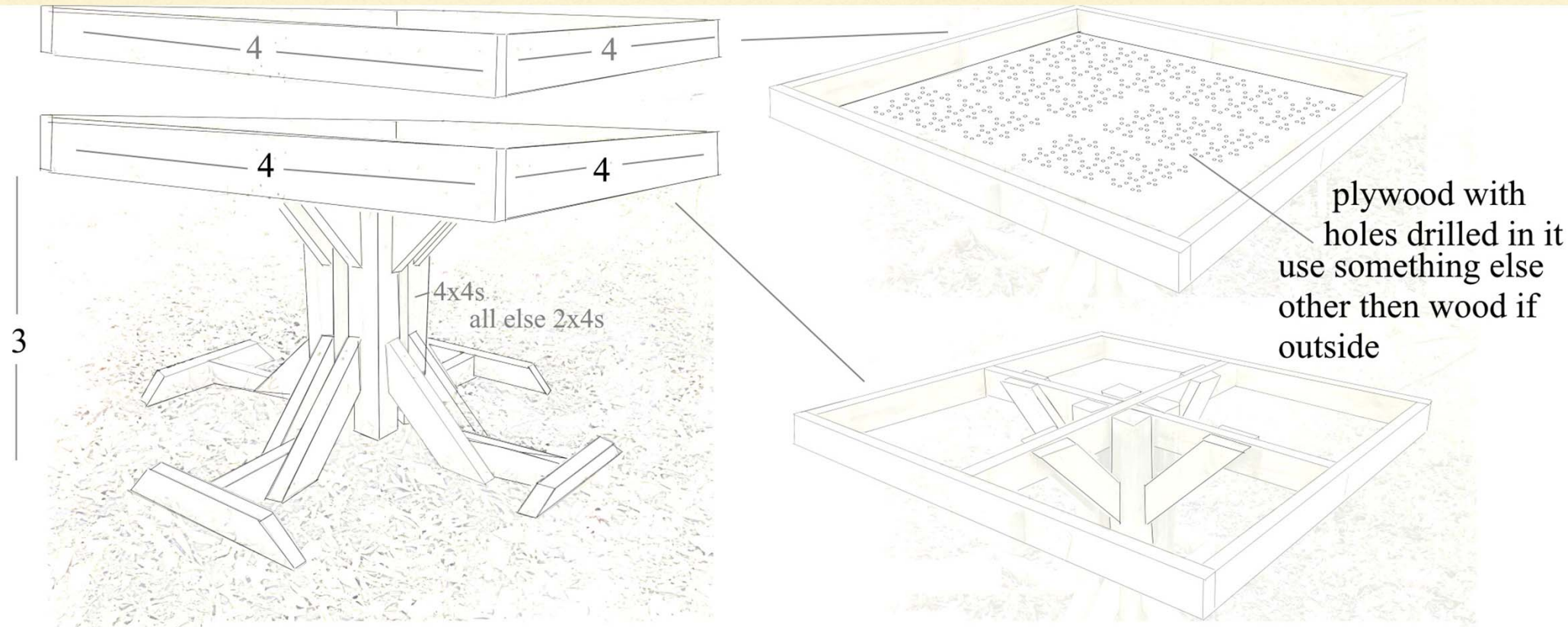




A photograph of a wooden structure under construction. The structure is made of light-colored plywood and has a dark wooden door. Two people are standing in front of the structure. The person on the left is wearing a green polo shirt, a grey cap, and a black and white patterned face mask. The person on the right is wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket, a red and black plaid headband, and a black and white patterned face mask. The structure is surrounded by trees and a dirt ground. The text "Size: 14ft (L) x 14ft (W) x 10-11ft (H)" is overlaid on the image.

Size: 14ft (L) x 14ft (W) x  
10-11ft (H)

# The Nest Platform



this platform is 4 X 4 feet square and 3 feet tall  
and a lot of stand

What the stand is made of is not important it can simple be a sturdy pole  
The height would be dependent on how high the inclosure is, are birds full winged,  
and so forth

The size of the nest to me should be no less the 4 feet and I prefer round  
The birds need enough room to spread their wings jumping up and jumping off

From Fort Worth Zoo

---

THE RESULTS??

---



MAY 19, 2022

2 EGGS!!







# 2022/2023 Breeding Season





(video included as a  
separate file)

Feb 2023

3 Eggs!!!

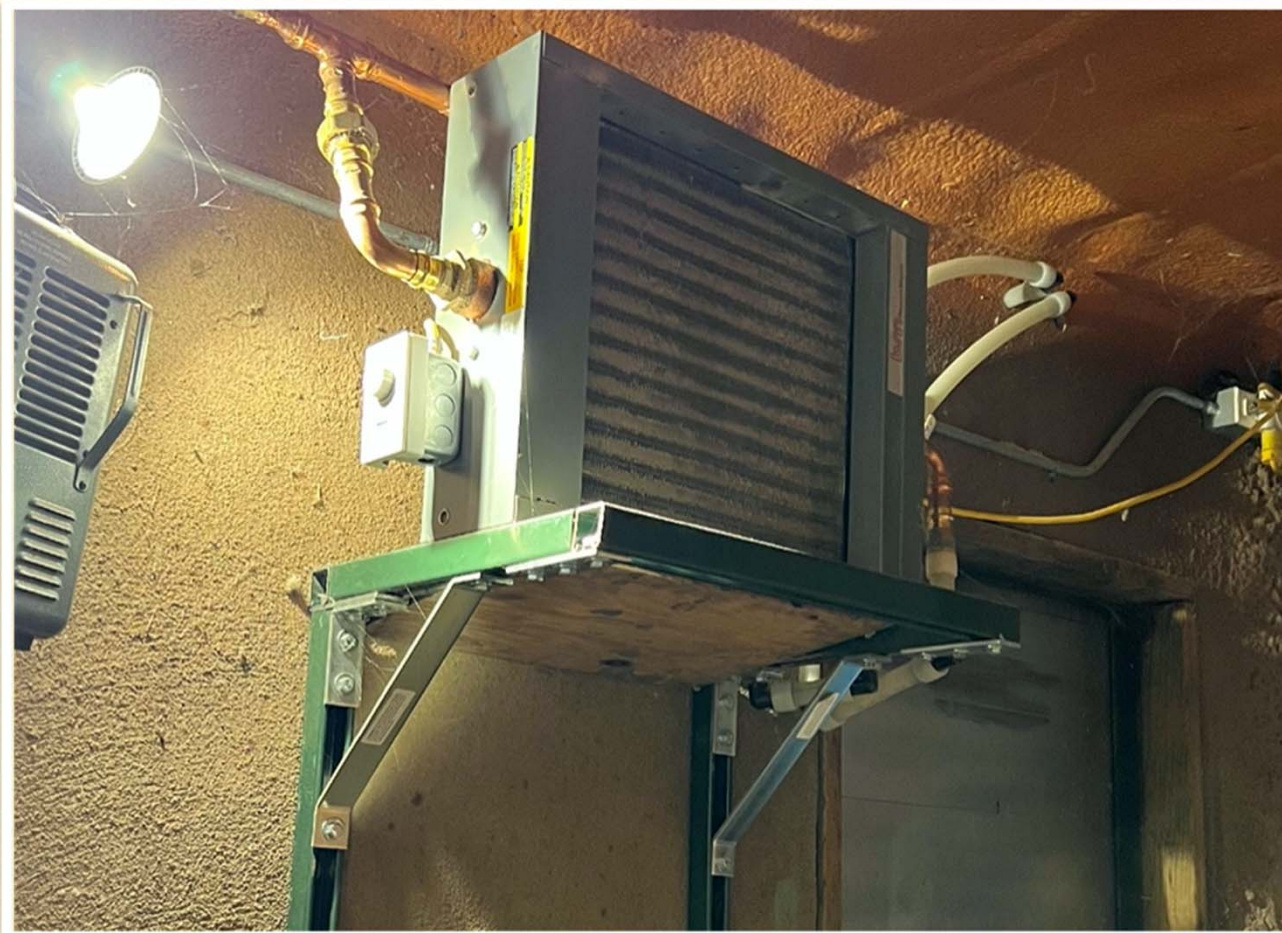
Now we wait:  
Hatch Window began  
Mar 24th



---

# What's Next?

---



- Added new heaters
  - Steps instead of hay bales
  - Sky Lights?
  - Insulation
  - Continue to encourage breeding
-

# Thank You!!

- ABQ BioPark  
Maintenance Team  
Bird Crew  
Horticulture Crew

ABQ BioPark and New Mexico BioPark  
Society

ASAG and Committee Members  
Mary Healy Grant

Questions? Email me at  
[amandabaca@cabq.gov](mailto:amandabaca@cabq.gov)

